

## **Menominee Indian Tribe's commitment to *Let's Move!* in Indian Country Initiative.**

The Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin has over 8,551 enrolled members. Most of which, reside on the Menominee Indian Reservation which covers 235,523 acres, situated in Northeastern Wisconsin. The Menominee Indian Tribe is noted for self-sufficiency in many aspects of government. However, Menominee Reservation/County ranks 72 out of 72 for the entire State of Wisconsin when health factors are considered. This includes high rates of Diabetes, Cardiovascular disease, high mortality, and AODA related illness.

Recently, the Menominee Tribal School participated in the Presidential Active Lifestyle Challenge and was recognized for their commitment to achievement in establishing a routine for the 189 or 191 Menominee youth who participated in the challenge, by receiving the PALA (Presidential Active Lifestyle Award).

### **Menominee Grocery Store:**

- The "Save-A-Lot" Grocery Store, when completed will sell basic groceries at affordable prices in correlation to the current economy on the Menominee Reservation, including fresh meats, fresh fruits and vegetables. There are also plans to sell local farm fresh items to supplement and encourage gardening initiatives.
- The ground breaking ceremony took place on June 21, 2011 @ 3pm in Keshena, WI. The project is estimated to be completed this Fall with a grand opening projected for November 1, 2011.

### **Menominee Tribal Clinic Initiatives:**

The Tribal Clinic offers a wide array of services with current programming aimed to solidify their dedication to trying to help keep Menominee healthy through the many clinic programs such as the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP), the Diabetes Program, Nutrition/WIC Services and the Smoking Cessation.

- Exercise classes are hosted 4 days a week with noon and after work classes. Fitness orientations are set up where individuals can do one-on-one goal setting to include guidance from the dietician, which aids in an additional nutrition component. They work with student athletes for off season training needs. They also work with the summer youth programs and do presentations to teach students how to lead healthier lives through fitness, nutrition, stress management, positive self-talk and other issues that are brought to their attention.
- This summer we have a nutrition challenge that we are challenging community members to try new fruits and vegetables (attached). In the winter we are looking at doing our Holiday No Gain Maintain Challenge again. Community walks are hosted throughout the seasons to encourage walking and family time.
- A week ago we had our Diabetes Summer Conference.

- Tour de Rez Challenge is in full swing, where residents and Tribal employees exercise and log their activities according to a mileage scale. Each member is trying to log enough miles to complete their walk to a specific destination. This year, they are walking to Alaska.
- This Fall After-School programming will continue in the Schools on the Reservation. It is solely fitness and the kids love it!!!
- Diabetes Relay Race, Tribal members are able
- Diabetes Prevention Program – DPP classes for those with pre-diabetes as well as community sponsored events.
- Community Advisory Board – analyzes barriers to healthy eating and physical fitness within the community.
- Agriculture Task Force – community gardens, plant and seed distribution – multi-agency collaborative effort.
- Monthly fruit and vegetable tray program drawing – Promote healthy eating by providing fruits and vegetables at one agency meeting per month
- Menominee biathlon – bike-run event
- Menominee Relay for Diabetes Annual walking event reaching 500-700 participants and their families
- Friday Summer Walking Series
- Upcoming Walking Literacy Events – oversized books are displayed page by page along a walking trail – parents and family members are encouraged to walk and read with their children.

### **Food Distribution Program:**

Food Distribution has implemented programming to solidify their commitment to nutrition and physical activity to include gardening activities;

- Tilled 52 garden spots for families that include children to plant fruits and vegetables
- Furnished seeds and starter plants to about 48 families for their gardening activities which has included children of our program families
- Family walk scheduled in conjunction with Nutrition services at MTC on 8/5/11
- Food Distribution is an active participant in the Diabetic relay on 8/20/11
- Food Distribution has our Annual Family fun day (previously called, Commod Fest) scheduled for 8/27/11 which includes adult and children's' cooking contest, music with physical activity for children
- Food Distribution is in the process of building 12 raised beds for families to include children so they can enjoy gardening with less strain, some of our children have helped their grandparents plant their gardens and raised beds.

### **Menominee Indian High School:**

- The Menominee Indian High School was recently the host of the Bernard Holsey Football Camp. Mr. Holsey is a retired NFL player for the Washington Redskins and Colts (to name a few). He is presently a Special Education Teacher at the High School and has organized football camps for underserved youth to attend for the past 10 years.

### **Menominee Recreation Center:**

- Responsible for the organizing the Menominee athletes who participate in the Native American Indigenous Games. This year the games are being held in Milwaukee, WI July 10, 2011 through July 14, 2011. We have adults and youth participating in the event as athletes, coaching, and volunteer staff.
- Have organized youth TCJ and Legion baseball teams that compete all summer with teams from surrounding areas.
- Assists Neopit and Keshena Little League coaches with field maintenance, transportation, and other activities to build baseball fundamental skills. Neopit and Keshena Little League teams are private and do their own fundraising for equipment and uniforms for their respective teams. These teams compete in the Western Shawano County region May-June of each summer.

### **Community Resource Center:**

- Gardening group meet each Monday to work on their garden at the CRC as well as their own gardens at their homes throughout the community. For those participants interested, this program provides the materials to make a raised bed garden (lumber, supports, dirt and seeds). Earlier in the season, clients planted their starter plants so they were ready when the gardens could be constructed. We also have a community garden at the center that anyone can participate in assisting with planting, bed design, weeding and harvesting. At harvest time we will set aside time for recipe research and cooking sessions to plan for harvesting and food storage of the items grown in the gardens. We will work with the UW Extension to assist us with this aspect of the program.
- TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) Case Workers have allowed clients to use a set number of hours per week (2-4 hrs. /wk.) to be set aside for Family Development. This could be taking your children to the park, library, for a walk and/or reading to your child. Hours can also be specified for exercise time if they are working towards a goal of a healthy lifestyle.
- Our program emphasizes self-sufficiency and these are two areas that assist in this process and commitment to active life styles and healthy nutrition.

These are just a few of the programs that highlight the Menominee Nation's commitment to active lifestyles and healthy nutrition initiatives. I could go on with many more examples, but I understand that your newsletter may not have enough space to include all of our preventative measures to combat risks to health and wellness occurring here in Indian Country.